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At this date we have five hundred and twenty-eight subscribers and we distribute two hundred and forty-four complimentary copies. I note a rather large number of errors in our list.

Driving rain this morning; reinvasion of gray ideas.

The notary comes at ten o'clock and with him Em. and I go to see Mme Freger, who is to sign some deed or other by which she yields the succession of her farm-rent to her son Louis.

Wonderful dignity of the old woman (she has just recovered from pleurisy and wanted to put her affairs in order, though she still has a year and a half of her lease). Near the door, a little apart from the others, her son Louis; he is now twenty-eight The brothers and brothers-in-law are to get together soon and sign a deed bearing witness to the fact that they consent to the mother's yielding to Louis four thousand francs* worth of furnishings, equivalent to the sum that Eugene, the elder son, received at the time of his marriage, in addition to two thousand francs coming to each of them from the father's estate.

The notary has prepared a letter; but instead of asking Mine Freger simply to sign, he invites her to write above her name; "good for security/* The poor old woman, somewhat bewildered, calls her son to her aid; but Louis cannot write for her. The notary offers her a model. Em. has the better idea of writing the letters in lightly in pencil, so that she will only have to cover them in ink. Her hand casts a shadow; she doesn't see very well and twice has to clean her glasses. We urge her to change her place and to sit facing the window; then the notary dictates the letters to her one by one; or says to her: "o, a circle; n, two downstrokes; two more downstrokes. . . *?* And while she is writing, I look at the old wooden table on which the notary has laid the deed* in which successive scourings have hollowed little valleys (where the wood is soft be-

tween the harder lines of the grain). So many memories *inscribed* in this table; the story of each one of those spots, of those scratches. . . . What the story of the Freger family must be! Character of the father: the harsh upbringing of his sons, sending them out to gather dung on the roads despite the gibes of passers-by; making a point of honor of always having the best-kept fields in the district; beauty, *noMMy,* of that form of avarice; the children taught always to give us the least attractive eggs, saving the heaviest ones for the market, etc, . . . Ferocious sense of property: the time he shot at our dog after he had strangled one of their ducks (although Em. had immediately gone to pay them for it) and not trying to hide it; the barbs of the wire fence cut off at the spot where the cows could take advantage of the grass in the avenue by sticking their heads through the fence. Recall the father's childhood, a mere farm-hand in the beginning and raising himself by dint of severity. The beauty of his children—the daughter *m* particular, who now (as always happens) reaches marriage already quite out of sbape. The